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*The Cruise
of
The "Dunottar Castle"*

Edgar W. Browning.

With Sir Donald Currie's Compliments.

W. G. Browning

CRUISE OF THE 'DUNOTTAR CASTLE'

THE CRUISE OF

THE ROYAL MAIL STEAMER

Dunottar Castle

ROUND SCOTLAND ON HER TRIAL TRIP



Dunottar Castle

EDINBURGH

Printed by T. and A. CONSTABLE

Printers to Her Majesty

1890



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FOREWORD



THE first suggestion of this Record of a very charming trip came from Sir DONALD CURRIE, the genial and courteous Host of our palatial 'House Boat.' Others pressed the task upon me; but no great pressure was required for so congenial a work. Indeed, I need hardly say that the preparation of the story of our Cruise has given me infinite pleasure.

My efforts have been ably seconded by the artistic skill of my fellow-guests, Dr. LENNOX BROWNE of London, and Miss CECILIA G. BLACKWOOD, whose facile pencils have contributed to the work many clever and beautiful illustrations. I am indebted to Mr. T. MACLAREN for the architectural drawings of the Cathedra and the Earl's Palace at Kirkwall; while a few of the pictures are taken from photographs by Miss MUNN, another of our gifted passengers.

The whole have been reproduced with great skill by the various engravers, with the assistance, and under the supervision, of Mr. JOHN GULICH, who has also contributed a few original drawings.

It is perhaps fitting that I should offer an apology to the good folks on board the ‘Dunottar Castle,’ who may not have been prepared for this realisation of the words of the poet:—

‘ A chiel’s amang ye takin’ notes,
And, faith, he’ll prent it.’

W. SCOTT DALGLEISH.

EDINBURGH, *October* 1890.



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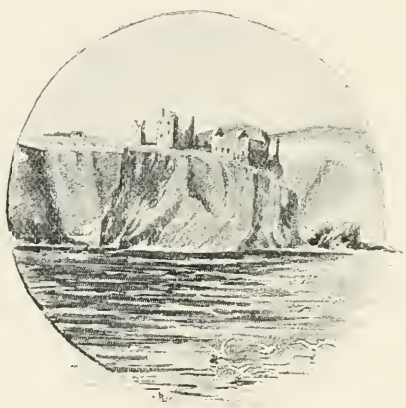
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THE LOG

1890.

August 30. *Saturday*.—Sailed from Greenock, down the Firth of Clyde, and round Arran. Anchored in Lamlash Bay.

31. *Sunday*.—Sailed round Mull of Cantire, and through the Sound of Islay. Met the ‘Iolanthe.’ Anchored off north point of Kerrera.

Sept. 1. *Monday*.—Lay at anchor all day. Visited Oban.

2. *Tuesday*.—Sailed up Sound of Mull. Visited Ardnamurchan, Loch Sunart, and Trishnish Islands in ‘Iolanthe.’ Anchored at Tobermory.

3. *Wednesday*.—Sailed between Eigg and Rum to Loch Scavaig. Visited Loch Cornisk. Sailed round Skye. Anchored off Portree.

4. *Thursday*.—Visited Strome Ferry, Loch Alsh, and Loch Duich in ‘Iolanthe.’ Anchored in Loch Kishorn.

5. *Friday*.—Sailed up west coast, round Cape Wrath, and along north coast. Anchored in Scrabster Roads, Thurso.

6. *Saturday*.—Sailed through Pentland Firth, to Kirkwall in the Orkneys. Anchored in Kirkwall Bay. Visited Kirkwall Cathedral, the Maeshowe, and the Stones of Brogar and Stenness. Started at 6 p.m. and sailed southward.

Sept. 7. Sunday.—Sailed past Aberdeen, Stonehaven, Dunottar Castle, Montrose, the Bass Rock, etc. Anchored at Leith.

8. *Monday.*—Visited the Forth Bridge in the 'Iolanthe.' Ship visited by Corporations of Edinburgh and Leith, and by the public. Guests debarked. Ship sailed for London in the evening.



CRUISE OF THE 'DUNOTTAR CASTLE'

I

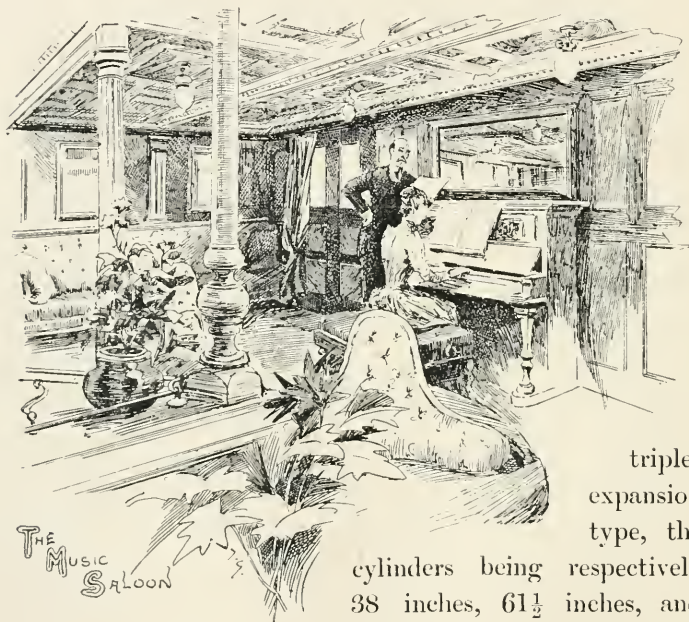
CONCERNING THE GOOD SHIP



THE 'Dunottar Castle' is the twenty-first ship built for the 'Castle' Company, and is the largest, and in all respects the most perfect, of all the vessels engaged in the South African Royal Mail Service. This fine vessel was built by the Fairfield Shipbuilding and Engineering Company of Govan, Glasgow, under the direction of Mr. Saxon White, the Manager of that Company, and the supervision of Mr. John List and Mr. George Scott of the 'Castle' Line. The fact that the ship was ordered from the Fairfield Company without competing contracts being invited from other firms, is a proof of the confidence which Sir Donald Currie had in the builders.

This is especially noteworthy when the dimensions and the capacity of the ship are remembered. She exceeds the largest of her sister ships, the 'Roslin Castle' by 1000 tons, the gross tonnage of the 'Dunottar Castle' being nearly 5500 tons, and her net tonnage 3069. Her length is 435 feet; the extreme breadth is 50 feet; and she is 36 feet

deep. The hull is constructed entirely of steel, with a continuous double cellular bottom, and with eight vertical bulkheads, which extend to the upper deck, and divide the ship into nine water-tight compartments. The engines are of the



THE
MUSIC
SALOON

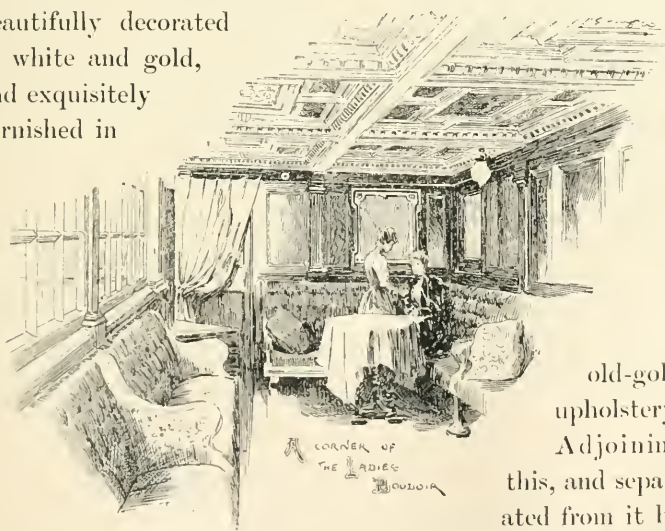
triple-
expansion
type, the

cylinders being respectively
38 inches, $61\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and
100 inches in diameter, with

a stroke of 5 feet 6 inches. Between 6000 and 7000 horse-power can be developed. Steam is supplied at a pressure of 160 lbs. to the square inch, by four large steam boilers and a supplementary boiler, each with six corrugated furnaces.

The steamer has accommodation for 360 passengers—170 first class, 100 second class, and 100 third class; but the last class is capable of being increased by 150 at least. The

crew consists of 150 officers and men, commanded by Captain Webster, the senior Captain of the 'Castle' Company. Each of the dining saloons accommodates at one time the whole complement of passengers assigned to it—a point of no small importance, as the trouble and worry of double meals are thereby avoided. The ship is admirably equipped in every particular, and the furnishings are of the most elegant character. The first-class dining saloon is a very handsome apartment, with panelled walls and dado, and is furnished throughout with refined taste. Aft of this saloon, there is a supplementary saloon for children and nurses. Forming a spacious gallery above the dining saloon is the music-room, which is beautifully decorated in white and gold, and exquisitely furnished in



CORNER OF
THE LADIES'
BOUDOIR

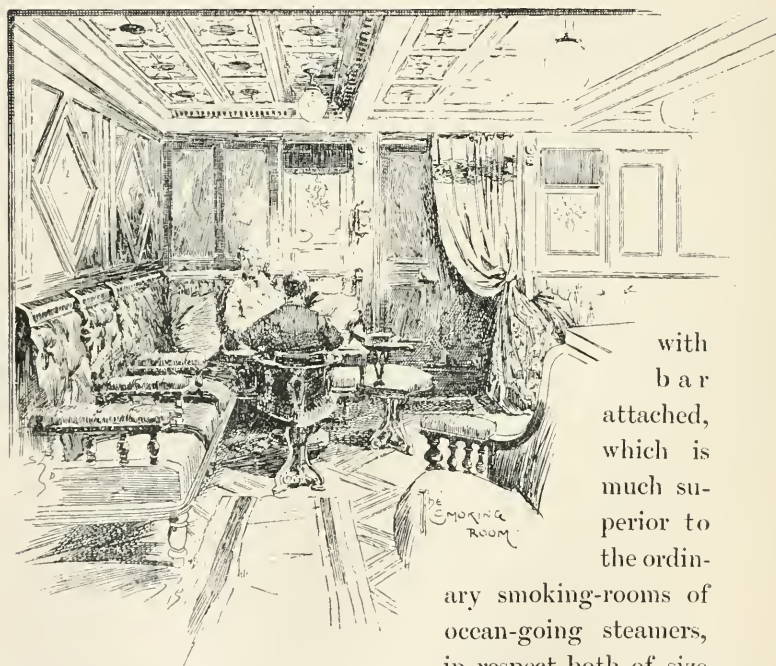
old-gold
upholstery.

Adjoining
this, and separated from it by

a handsome screen

of bevelled glass, is the ladies' boudoir, which is also most luxuriously furnished.

A notable feature of this part of the ship is the spacious double staircase, leading from the saloon to the main and upper decks. Like the saloon itself, it is handsomely decorated with solid panels, and every detail is conceived and executed in good taste. Aft the main deck state-rooms, there is a handsome and very comfortable smoking-room,



with
bar
attached,
which is
much su-
perior to
the ordin-

ary smoking-rooms of
ocean-going steamers,
in respect both of size

and of furnishings. Behind the staircase on the upper deck is the reading-room, which contains writing-tables, book-shelves, and lounges.

This may be the proper place to mention that the ship's library, of nearly five hundred volumes, is exceedingly

attractive and well selected. It contains many standard works in history, travels, and fiction, including some of the most recent publications. It also contains valuable books of reference, in the shape of atlases and gazetteers, and a representative selection of music, including Scottish, English, and Irish songs and glees. The man or the woman would be very difficult to please who could not find within the ship itself, with its pianos, organ, and library, ample resources for spending pleasantly and profitably three or four weeks at sea.

The promenade deck is exceptionally spacious, and affords ample room for those recreations with which time is wont to be beguiled in tropical seas.

The first-class state-rooms are fitted up in a very handsome, luxurious style, with iron spring-beds, sofas, and lavatories, all constructed on the most approved principles.



The Main-Deck.

The intermediate sleeping-berths differ but little, in point of comfort and convenience, from those assigned to first-class passengers; and the dining-saloon, which has its own piano and organ, is infinitely superior to what we were accustomed to in old-fashioned steamers. The third-class

accommodation is altogether superior to that provided in the general run of ocean-going steamers.

The sanitary arrangements include some special features, one of which is an improved system of ventilation with compressed air. Marble baths, and all the most approved lavatory appliances, are provided in sumptuous fashion. A novel luxury in the 'Castle' liners is a barber's shop, with a rotatory hair-brushing machine worked by an electric motor. Indeed, scarcely anything is lacking which could be desired by the most fastidious traveller on shore.

One of the greatest charms of the ship is the electric lighting, which is carried out on a perfect scale. Nothing has done so much as the introduction of the electric light to make ocean-travelling comfortable and safe. It is bright and cleanly, and it is always available. It is an immense advantage to be able to turn on a bright light in your state-room at any moment. The evening hours in the saloon, instead of being dreary, are looked forward to with pleasure, and are thoroughly enjoyed. In point of fact, the saloon is quite as brilliant at night as during the day.

The decks also are brightly lighted up at night with electric cluster lights, as well as with single lamps, so that dancing and other recreations can be carried on with the greatest comfort. The ship's band of ten or twelve instruments is also an excellent institution, which does much to relieve the tedium of the voyage.

The rapidity with which the 'Dunottar Castle' was got into working order speaks well for the resources and the organising power of the Clyde shipbuilders. When the ship was launched at Govan, on May 22d, she was a mere

hulk—a huge steel case intersected with a few floors and partitions. When the trial trip took place on August 28th, exactly fourteen weeks later, she was completely finished, furnished, and manned, and was ready in every particular to undertake a long voyage. Those who saw her at the Tail of the Bank, off Greenock, at the latter date, had some difficulty in believing that she was the same vessel. Everything was in its place, down to the minutest curtain-ring and the smallest carpet-tack; and every man was at his post, from the Captain to the cabin-boy.

The behaviour of the ship on the trial trip was admirable, and left nothing to be desired. The day was splendid, and everything went well. The ship attained a speed of $17\frac{1}{2}$ knots on the measured mile, off Skelmorlie, and both builders and owners were satisfied with the results, as they had good reason to be.



The Ship on the Stocks—May 22, 1890.

II

IN THE FIRTH OF CLYDE

HE trial cruise will not soon be forgotten by those who were privileged to take part in it. The trip was worthy of the great ship, and worthy of the famous 'Castle' Line. The strangers and foreigners, the Englishmen and the colonists, who were of the party, had an opportunity of seeing all that is grandest in Scottish coast-scenery, such as is enjoyed by few natives; and every Scotsman on board must have felt proud of his country.

The course taken was the converse of that of Agricola, when his galleys sailed round Scotland, and proved for the first time that Britain was an island. While the Romans sailed, or rather rowed in open galleys, from the Firth of Forth to the Firth of Clyde, the 'Dunottar Castle' pleasure-party steamed from the Clyde to the Forth in a veritable floating palace, replete with the comforts of advanced civilisation, and embodying the most recent developments of science in the applications of steam and of electricity. The contrast is almost too great to be appreciated even by the most imaginative modern mind. It is difficult to realise what the feelings of James Watt, or of Henry Bell, would

be were they permitted to see to what perfection the results of their inventive genius have been brought by their successors.

Perhaps few of those who entered on the expedition realised the useful purposes which it served. They thought only of the pleasant holiday provided for them; but in truth it answered a more practical and more important end. It was, in fact, a preliminary trial, in which the crew and all the officers, including the stewards, were put through their facings, and in which the commissariat and other resources of the management were subjected to a pretty severe test. The whole routine of the daily life was precisely similar to that which will prevail in the regular voyages of the ship from London to the Cape, and it is but just to say that the results were entirely satisfactory.

The 'Dunottar Castle' presented a splendid appearance as she rode at anchor at the Tail of the Bank, off Greenock, on Saturday, August 30th, awaiting the arrival of the invited guests of Sir Donald Currie. Being light of draught, she lay high in the water, and made everything else in the neighbourhood, even an American liner, look small in comparison, while her beautiful lines were seen to the greatest advantage. On board, everything was ship-shape and in good order; and when Sir Donald Currie, on his arrival from Garth, was received on the main deck about noon, by Captain Webster and his officers, it might have been supposed that the steamer had been in commission for years, and was undergoing an inspection on her return from one of her ocean voyages.

The view from the upper deck was magnificent. Few scenes in the British Isles can compare in beauty and variety

with the estuary of the Clyde opposite Greenock. We stood in the centre of a wide cyclorama, nearly every point in which glowed in brilliant sunshine. Greenock alone was dark and murky, as is its wont. Even Gourrock gleamed in colour, as it caught the sun's rays emerging from the mists. Dumbarton Castle loomed large in the warm haze to the eastward. Helensburgh basked peacefully on its wooded slopes. Kilcreggan and Cove smiled in their leafy bowers, while beyond them Ben Lomond raised on high its massive head. Westward, the rugged ridge of the Arrochar Hills and Argyll's Bowling Green filled up the distance. Then the line of view descended again at Strone Point, and the placid Holy Loch, and the bright villas of Hunter's Quay, and so the circuit was complete.

When the last tug-load of passengers and luggage had been received on board, the anchor was weighed, and the majestic ship steamed down the Firth past the Cloch lighthouse, past Castle Wemyss, and Wemyss Bay, and Skelmorlie, on the one side, and past Dumoon and Inellan on the other. Off the Greater Cumbrae we lay-to, in order to receive on board Lord Provost Muir of Glasgow, who, with his brother Commissioners of the Clyde Trust, had been engaged in an inspection of the lighthouses on these coasts. Their little steamer drew up alongside, and the Commissioners were courteously received on board and were shown over the ship. The Commissioners, *minus* the Lord Provost, were dismissed with a cheer, and we proceeded on our way.

Passing Rothesay Bay and Mount Stuart House, one of the Marquis of Bute's residences, we enter a wider sea, and get a fine view of Goatfell and the rugged peaks of Arran which

surround Glen Sannox. Opposite that weird glen, of evil omen, we turn northward, and steam past the Fallen Rocks, and round the north point of Arran into Kilbrannan Sound, our purpose being to sail round Arran and to anchor for the night in Lamlash Bay. We have a pleasant glimpse, in passing, of Loch Ranza and its rugged keep, and of the valleys and 'cols' that lead over to Glen Sannox and Glen Rosa. The west coast of Arran, however, is distinctly tame, and gives few tokens of cultivation and industry, until

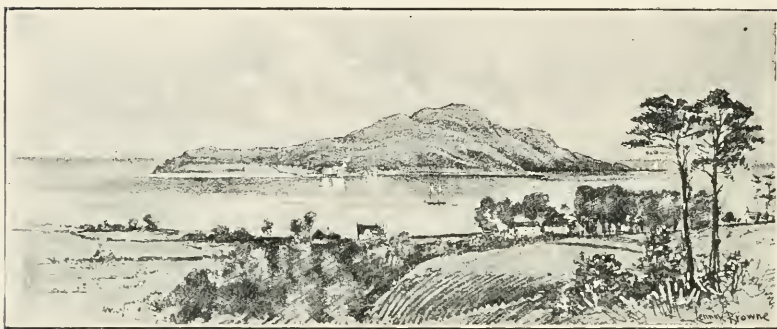


Arran—from the Firth of Clyde.

we approach the south end of the island. There are, indeed, more signs of an active population on the peninsula of Cantire, on our right. Arran, however, can boast of historical, or at least of traditional, interest, for the King's Cave, near Blackwaterfoot, is said to have been the first resting-place of Robert the Bruce on his landing from Rathlin Island.

As we steam southward, that island and the Irish coast are clearly visible beyond the Mull of Cantire. Looking back from this point, the picturesque outline of the mountains in the north of Arran stands out boldly against the

northern sky, while southward we see Ailsa Craig and its pale grey rocks, with their myriads of gannets. By and by, in the gloamin', we pass Whiting Bay, in which at least half a hundred small boats are busily engaged in deep-sea fishing. Then we steam cautiously between Holy Island



Lamlash Bay and Holy Isle.

and King's Cross Point (another landmark of the Bruce) into Lamlash Bay, where we drop anchor, and prepare to dine in peace.

We then begin to realise the importance of the fact that our cruise is to be one of pleasure, as well as of practical use, in a sense not previously thought of. We are to steam ahead during daylight, and our nights are to be spent peacefully at anchor in quiet waters. The arrangement is not only comfortable on that account, but is also convenient, inasmuch as we shall miss very little of the coast-scenery—none of it, indeed, if we are careful to rise betimes.

As we lay at our anchorage, we had an opportunity of realising what the electric light has done for navigation, not

merely in the brilliant lighting of our own ship, but in that of several of the Clyde steamers. When the ‘Duchess of Hamilton,’ a coasting steamer, passed through the bay with her lights gleaming, she might have been a floating firework displayed for our special gratification.

Calmly and peacefully the night was passed. Some spent an hour pleasantly in the Music Saloon, under the spell of music and song. Others found more congenial occupation in the Smoking-room. Not a few lingered on deck till a late hour, bewitched by the galaxy of stars, or watching the glimmering lights of the Lamlash cottages, as, one by one, they succumbed to the demands of repose, and bade us a silent ‘good-night.’ One or two adventurous rowing boats came out at a late hour to inspect the monster of the deep that had suddenly disturbed the quiet of the bay; but the splash of their oars soon died away, and our little world was left in a silence that was felt.



Ailsa Craig.

III

AMONG THE SOUTHERN HEBRIDES



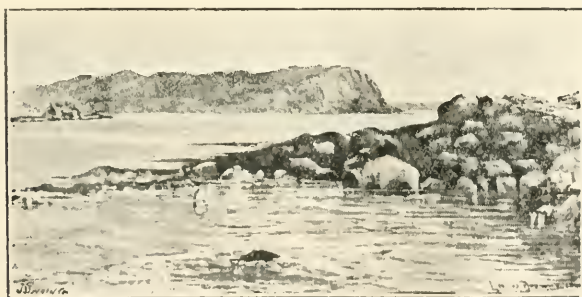
If the denizens of Lamlash were looking forward to obtaining a good view of the 'Dunottar Castle' next day (Sunday), they must have been grievously disappointed, for we made an early start, and were out of the bay before the majority of them were out of their beds. By seven o'clock, we had rounded the Mull of Cantire, and were beginning to feel the swell of the Atlantic. The morning was clear and crisp, and both sea and sky seemed joyous in the sunshine. Nearly every one was on deck for an hour before breakfast, and the sharp air was most exhilarating.

The Irish coast remained in sight for several hours; but still more attractive was the view of the west coast of Cantire. Machrihanish Bay awakened pleasant memories in the golfers on board. They had been there, and still would go; and very tempting the bay looked with its gleaming sands and sparkling wavelets. Our course now lay through the Sound of Islay, which runs between that island and its sister Jura. Long before we reached the Sound, we were once more in quiet water under the lee of Islay, and with the well-marked Paps of Jura right ahead. In the Sound, the sea was absolutely still, and there we had morning service,



Scarba and the Isles—from Mull.

reverently conducted by Captain Webster, Sir Donald Currie reading the lessons. Shortly afterwards we met, by



Loch Buy Head—from Carsaig, Mull.

appointment, our host's large steam yacht, the 'Iolanthe,'

which attended us during the remainder of our cruise, and added greatly to our enjoyment by taking us into narrow and



Outside of Kerrera—Ben Cruachan in the distance.

shallow lochs and sounds into which the great ship could not have ventured. Mr. James Currie, of Leith, with his family, was on board, and did all in his

power to render our voyage an agreeable one. The interest of the sail increased as we passed northward between Jura and Colonsay. The weather was superb. The Sabbath calm seemed to have settled down on hill and sea. It was a day for lounging on deck, and for gazing at the summer sky, or on the Islands of the Blest which surrounded us.

We were prepared for a toss at the Strait of Corrie-vreckan; but though the boiling of the tide was perceptible to the eye, it was unappreciable by any other sense, at least to those in the massive 'Dunottar Castle.' As we crossed the Firth of Lorne, the mountains of Argyllshire came into full view, Ben Cruachan and Ben More of Mull being specially conspicuous. Off Scarba, we made a wide detour westward in the direction of the Ross of Mull, so that we might see its cliffs and caves and the shores of dark Loch Buy.

Toward evening, we reached our anchorage at the

northern point of Kerrera, but outside of Oban Bay, which is crowded at this season with yachts and other small craft.



Dunolly Castle, Oban.

We were opposite to David Hutchison's monument, set up near the scene of his labours, to remind travellers of the great things which he did for them, and for Scotland, in opening up the Western Highlands to swift steamer traffic. We had also a distant view of Dunolly Castle, the ancestral home of the Macdougalls. Evening service was conducted by Sir Arthur Black-

wood, Secretary of the General Post-Office, London; and the earnestness and freshness of his address were highly appreciated.

The weather changed in the night, and we awoke to find ourselves enveloped in mist and in drizzling rain. A projected trip up Loch Linnhe to Ballachulish was consequently abandoned; and we spent the whole day at our anchorage, awaiting the arrival of expected guests at Oban, who were brought off in the 'Iolanthe,' and thence in the steam



The 'Iolanthe' off Oban—Rainy Weather.

launch. Those of us who were so inclined had thus an opportunity of seeing the capital of the Western Highlands, though not under the most favourable conditions; of visiting its



View of Oban and Bay.

attractive shops, and of admiring, though at a safe distance, its numerous or innumerable hotels. When it rains on this coast it does so with a vengeance. In fine weather Oban is one of the most beautiful places in Scotland; on a wet day it is one of the most disagreeable under heaven.



Oban Pier.

IV

IN THE SOUND OF MULL

NEXT morning (Tuesday) finds us in the Sound of Mull, one of the most beautiful and romantic of Highland seas. The lighthouse full astern stands on the point of the island of Lismore, anciently the seat of the Bishops of Argyll, and still more famous as the home of its Dean, James Macgregor, who, in the sixteenth century, made a valuable



The Mull Hills—from Kerrera.

collection of poems in Gaelic and English, well known as the 'Book of the Dean of Lismore.' The picturesque ruin at

the entrance to the Sound, on the eastmost point of Mull, is Duart Castle, the home of the Macleans. Not far off is the 'Lady Rock,' which disappears at high-water, and on which one of the Macleans once left his wife, intending that she



Lismore Lighthouse.

should perish when the tide rose and covered the rock. She was Ellen of Lorne, a sister of the Earl of Argyll. One of her brothers rescued her, and afterwards slew Maclean. Such

stories are common in these regions: they cling, like the ivy, to every ruined tower. These traditions of lawlessness and vengeance formed the greater part of the education of the people.

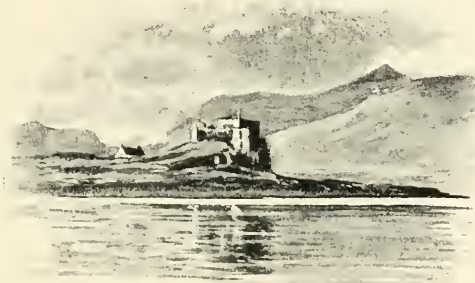
By and by we pass on the right Ardtornish Castle, a stronghold of the Lords of the Isles, and memorable as the site of the opening of Scott's poem:—

'Thy rugged halls, Ardtornish! rung,
And the dark seas, thy towers that lave,
Heaved on the beach a softer wave,
As 'mid the tuneful choir to keep
The diapason of the Deep.
Lulled were the winds on Innimore,
And green Loch Aline's woodland shore,
As if wild woods and waves had pleasure
In listing to the lovely measure.'

The ruins of Ardtornish are near the entrance to Loch Aline, and under the shadow of the massive and bare hills of Morven. These hills had a never-ending charm for Dr. Norman McLeod, whose native village of Morven lies on the east coast of the Sound, nearly opposite Tobermory. The Sound to-day is in one of its angry moods: clouds obscure the sun; mists cling to the mountains, and the sullen sky is reflected in the fretful sea.

Presently we pass on the left the ruins of Aros Castle,

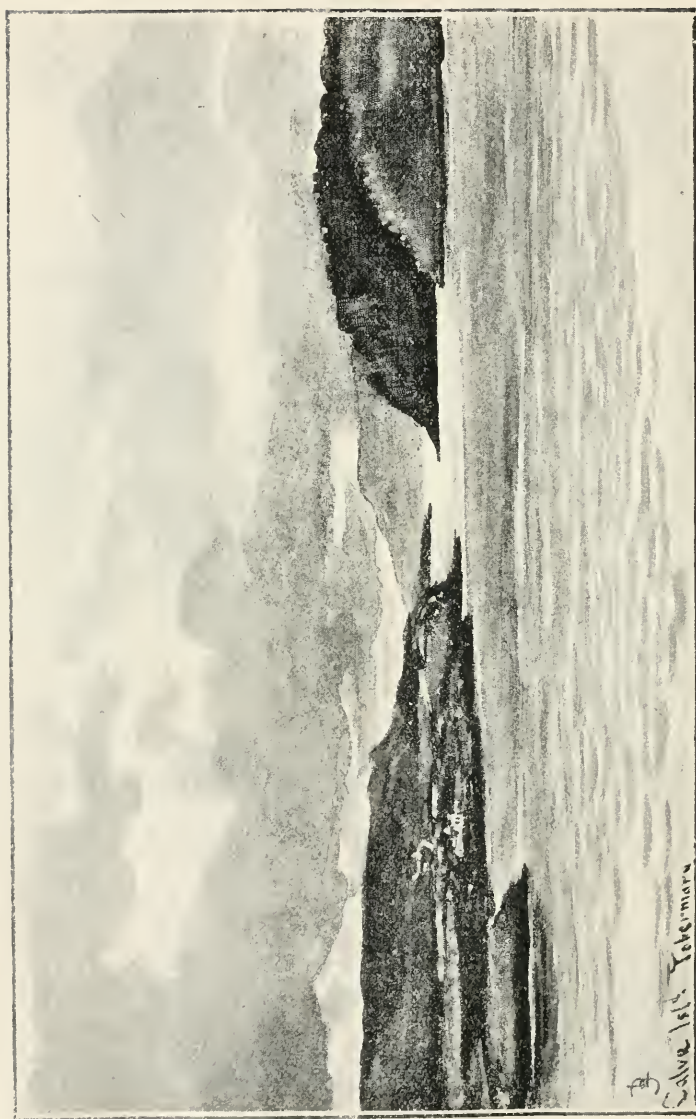
another of those rock-built fortresses which are so numerous on these coasts. The stupendous mountain-wall which appears to close up the Sound at the north end is



Castle Duart—Mull.

the rocky peninsula of Ardnamurchan, the most westerly point on the British mainland. At its base stands yet another ruined castle, that of Mingarry, also a stronghold of the Lords of the Isles, and woven with warp of treachery and woof of heroism into their adventurous story.

Passing Tobermory Bay, to which we shall return by and by, we sail beyond Ardnamurchan Point, and have a distant view of the Scur of Eigg and the graceful outline of the mountains of Rum. The mists lift somewhat, and give us a view of the north coast of Mull,



Salva Is. Tebermaru

and of the bold beetling headland of Ardnamurchan, with its tall lighthouse thrust out into the sea. Then we return to Tobermory, the quaint and primitive capital of Mull, and anchor in its lovely Bay.

The village, which, like a few other places in the Highlands, looks best at a distance, skirts two sides of the Bay. The western banks are steep and richly wooded. On the east, the Bay is cut off from the sea by the small island of Calve, which forms a natural breakwater, thus producing a spacious and very safe anchorage. Aros House, imbedded



Ardnamurchan Point.

in woods, stands on the south side of the Bay, and near it there is a very fine waterfall on the stream which emerges from the Mishnish Lochs—a favourite resort of anglers. From the deck, a lovely view of the Sound of Mull is seen over the crest of Calve. The hills in the distance are dark, but the east shores of the Sound are lighted up with gleams of sunshine, developing marvellous combinations of colour.

The day being still young, the 'Iolanthe' is brought into requisition, and a delightful trip is made up Loch Sunart, a veritable fiord in its windings, and its narrowness, and its flanking mountains. As we enter the Loch, we catch one of those occasional and transient effects which delight



Loch Sunart.



The Narrows—Loch Sunart.

artists, but which it is hazardous to paint, and still more difficult to reproduce without colour. A brilliant rainbow rests one of its extremities on the massive hill of Ardnamurchan, and

practically cuts it in two; one half of it being melted away under the changing colours of the arch.

It was during this trip that

some members of the party developed extraordinary skill in the game of deck quoits, while others indulged in athletic sports of various kinds, terminating in a 'tug-of-war' in which nearly every man and boy on board took part. It was alleged, however, with

what truth I know not, that a majority of those on the winning side wore deck shoes with india-rubber soles.



*Mist Rainbow on Ardnamurchan—
off Tobermory Lighthouse.*

Nevertheless, they maintained stoutly that 'it was weight that told.' The sail up Loch Sunart was very enjoyable. A fair breeze was blowing, and the sun, which had been concealed before, burst through the clouds, and shed beauty on the landscape.



Glengorm—Mull.

In the afternoon we embarked on the 'Iolanthe' again, and sailed round the north coast of Mull in fairly good weather, past Ardmore Point, past Glengorm Castle (the property of Mr. James Cowan), past Caliach Point, and Calgary Castle with its marvellous silver strand, and past

Trishnish Point, in the direction of the Trishnish Islands. A farmhouse near Caliach Point has an interest for literary men. Thomas Campbell the poet spent five months there as tutor when a young man; and there he first conceived the theme of *The Pleasures of Hope*. Another poet has revelled in this region; for the Trishnish Islands belong to the group described by Scott:—

‘The shores of Mull on the eastward lay,
And Ulva dark, and Colonsay,
And all the group of islets gay
That guard famed Staffa round.
Then all unknown its columns rose,
Where dark and undisturbed repose
The cormorant had found,
And the shy seal had quiet home,
And weltered in that wondrous dome,
Where, as to shame the temples decked
By skill of earthly architect,
Nature herself, it seemed, would raise
A Minster to her Maker’s praise!’

The Trishnish Islands are covered with rich grass, which makes excellent pasture. The Laird of Calgary fattens his



The Trishnish Islands.

mutton there during the summer months, and sends out a

yacht once a fortnight to capture two or three sheep for use. As the animals are as wild and as swift as deer, capturing them is no easy task. They are generally driven by a contracting line of men and boys into a trap made with spars and a sail between two rocks on the shore; but they often break through the cordon, and even leap sometimes over the heads of the drivers.

This, however, is a digression. The rough sea, and consideration for the weaker vessels of the party, male and female, induced Sir Donald Currie to abandon the intention



Distant View of Staffa.

of visiting Staffa, with a distant view of which the guests had to be satisfied. It is noteworthy that this yachting cruise was the only occasion, during the whole trip, on which symptoms of sea-sickness showed themselves. It may be added that the most serious case was that of Sir Donald's young piper, who had never been on the sea before; but scarcely had the yacht been put about when a few blasts of a pibroch, recalling memories of the braes of Garth and

Glenlyon, gave audible proofs of his convalescence, and indeed completed the cure. On returning to Tobermory we landed, and enjoyed a refreshing walk on the shore before dinner: some exploring the woods about Aros House, and others climbing to the heights that surround the town, whence a wider view was obtained.

The evening was given up to recreation, including dancing to the music of the ship's band, under the awning on the promenade deck, which, lighted up with electric lamps, made a spacious and brilliant ballroom. This was carried on in presence of nearly the whole population of Tobermory, which had come out, on Sir Donald's invitation, to see the stately ship. The performances were not by any means con-



fined to the saloon folks. Our stalwart pilot, relieved of his duties for the night, came out strong in the 'reels'; and, having shown his paces in a 'fling' with our chief, he was in

great request with the Tobermory lassies, with one of whom he engaged in a kind of terpsichorean duel, which reminded the spectators of

‘The dancing pair that, simply, sought renown
By holding out to tire each other down.’

Another hero of the dance was one of the quartermasters, who was a match for any of the natives, or, for that matter, for any of the crew, engineers or seamen. It was a case of ‘one down, another come on,’ and the contest might have lasted till break of day. Unfortunately, however, the festivities were marred by a heavy downpour of rain; but that did not prevent the singing of ‘Auld Lang Syne’ and ‘God save the Queen,’ or hearty cheers for our host, before the party broke up. One could not but feel sorry for the poor people who had to find their way to the shore in the dark, and through the pelting, pitiless rain.



Ardtornish Castle.

V

ROUND ABOUT SKYE

WEDNESDAY morning was dull and misty. We had to feel our way cautiously between Eigg and Rum in the direction of Skye. No view could be obtained either of the Coolins or of the mountains of the mainland. It was indeed tantalising to know that we were in the neighbourhood of some of the grandest



The 'Iolanthe' off Eigg and Rum.

scenery in Scotland, and to be unable to see a vestige of it, except occasionally a few outlying rocks, or a mountainous headland swept by the mist. Early in the day we cast anchor in the

Sound of Soa, near the entrance to Loch Scavaig.

The object of stopping at that point in the voyage was

to visit Loch Coruisk, the wildest and most desolate of Highland lochs, imbedded in the heart of the Coolins. In spite of the mist and the threatening rain, nearly the whole party started in the 'Iolanthe' for the head of Loch Seavaig. Seavaig itself is a very grand loch, partaking of the gloom of the mountains that surround it,—a gloom



Loch Seavaig.

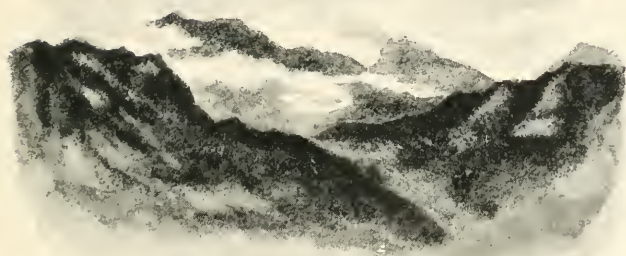
relieved only by the breakers on the rocky coast, and the glint of the wings of sea-birds. The landing, at all times difficult, was rendered more so by the slippery state of the rocks; but it was effected without serious mishap. After a rough walk of half a mile, over boulders and broken rocks, the south end of the dark lake was reached. No one had any reason to regret the toils or the risks of the expedition. Though the mists concealed the mountain tops, they intensified the darkness of the lake. The rain, which had been falling for some time in sport, now began to come down in

earnest, and it quickly swelled the thousand streams that covered the hillsides. The silver streaks had become roaring cataracts. The loneliness of the scene was oppressive. The lines in which Scott has described the silent lake, whose name is a synonym for desolation, occurred to many. It is the Bruce that speaks:—

‘ Saint Mary ! what a scene is here !
 I’ve traversed many a mountain-strand,
 Abroad, and in my native land,
 And it has been my lot to tread
 Where safety more than pleasure led ;
 Thus, many a waste I’ve wandered o’er,
 Clombe many a crag, crossed many a moor ;
 But, by my halidome,
 A scene so rude, so wild as this,
 Yet so sublime in barrenness,
 Ne’er did my wandering footsteps press,
 Where’er I happed to roam.’

No marvel thus the Monarch spake ;
 For rarely human eye has known
 A scene so stern as that dread lake,
 With its dark ledge of barren stone.
 Seems that primeval earthquake’s sway
 Hath rent a strange and shattered way
 Through the rude bosom of the hill ;
 And that each naked precipice,
 Sable ravine, and dark abyss,
 Tells of the outrage still.
 The wildest glen but this can show
 Some touch of Nature’s genial glow ;
 On high Benmore green mosses grow,
 And heath-bells bud in deep Glencroe,
 And copse on Cruchan-Ben ;
 But here,—above, around, below,
 On mountain or in glen,—
 Nor tree, nor shrub, nor plant, nor flower,
 Nor ought of vegetative power,
 The weary eye may ken.

For all is rocks at random thrown,
 Black waves, bare crags, and banks of stone,
 As if were here denied
 The summer sun, the spring's sweet dew,
 That clothe with many a varied hue
 The bleakest mountain-side.



Mountains in Mist—Skye.

The evening mists, with ceaseless change,
 Now clothed the mountains' lofty range,
 Now left their foreheads bare,
 And round the skirts their mantle furled,
 Or on the sable waters curled,
 Or on the eddying breezes whirled,
 Dispersed in middle air.
 And oft, condensed, at once they lower,
 When, brief and fierce, the mountain shower
 Pours like a torrent down.

If the rain added to the picturesqueness of the scene, it did not add to the comfort of the visitors, most of whom returned to the ship drenched from head to foot. But their spirits were not damped, whatever their bodies were:

for all were in the greatest good humour. Some one, probably a man, expressed the wish that the mist were away. Some one else, probably a woman, suggested that it would not be *missed* if it were away. Such 'Coruiskations' of wit were not inappropriate to the occasion, though they may have been to the scene. They helped at all events to keep up the spirits of the party. The refreshments distributed on the return to the 'Dunottar Castle' had a similar effect.

The anchor was then weighed, and we steamed round the west and north coasts of Skye, the 'Iolanthe' going in the opposite direction through the Sound of Sleat to Portree, where we were to meet, and to anchor for the night. The effects of the rain were seen in a tremendous increase in the



Detached Rocks—Coast of Skye.

waterfalls that precipitate themselves into the Sound of Soa from the steep sides of the mountains. The cataracts were indeed magnificent, and every one felt that the wild weather had not been without its compensations.

To tell the truth, however, the scenery had to be taken very much for granted. One or two picturesque bits of

rocky coast were all that could be seen. ‘M‘Leod’s Maidens’ were ‘children of the Mist.’ Dunvegan Castle was nowhere. Duntulm was invisible. The bold Quiraing, and the Old Man of Storr, and Prince Charlie’s Cave, were held as seen ; and when we anchored in the evening in the Sound of Raasay, opposite Portree, we might have been anywhere.

These untoward conditions, however, did not interfere with our enjoyment of the good things provided for us on board, or of the adjournment to the smoking-room at a later hour, when bad jokes and good stories were equally enjoyed, and when some wonderful card tricks were performed by our own Wizard of the North, who proved, however, mere potter’s clay in the cool hands of Captain Webster.

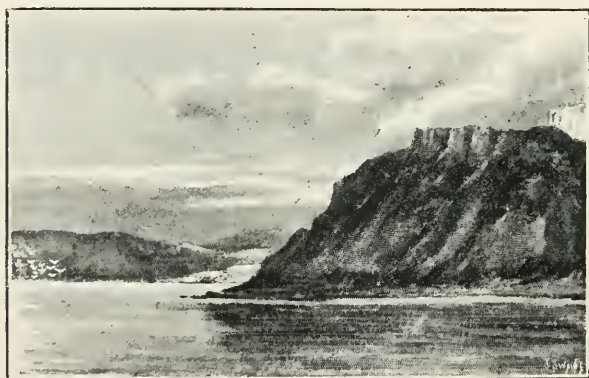


Near Strome Ferry.

VI

WILD LOCH ALSH AND DARK LOCH DUICH

THE morning of Thursday brought a welcome change. The day opened grandly, and the good weather which then set in blessed us during the remainder of the cruise. Those who rose early, of whom our Special Artist was one, were rewarded with a splendid view of the hills behind Portree, and of the bay and harbour. We started soon after breakfast



Outside of Portree Bay—Sunrise.

in the 'Iolanthe' for Strorne Ferry, where several members of the party were to leave us, and where others were to take their places, while all eagerly awaited letters and telegrams.

The sail across the Inner Sound was extremely pleasant



Scalpa Island—Skye.

and exhilarating. Loch Sligachan slept in peace. Scurina-gilleann and Blaven still wore their night-caps. The island of Scalpa was a blaze of rich colour, heightened by the white sails of a passing yacht. The islands of Longa and Pabha were emeralds set in a blue sea. Broadford was a picture of self-contained repose. Off



Whale blowing—off Skye.

Pabha, two large whales—probably truants from the school, a thousand strong, lately reported from the Shetland seas—

appeared ever and anon to plough the surface of the water, and one of our photographers succeeded in catching them

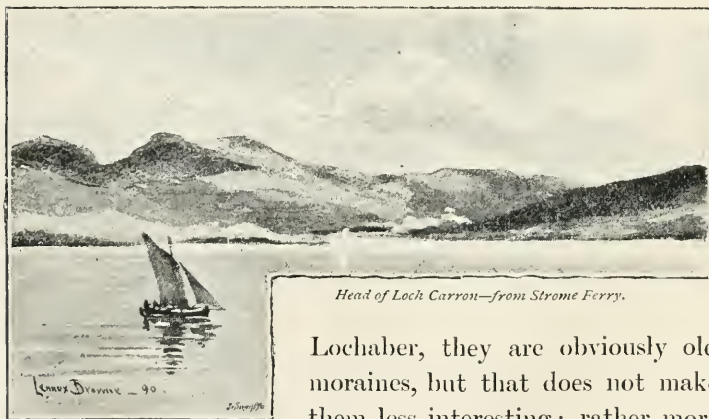
(in her camera) in the very act of blowing clouds of spray into the air.



Loch Carron—from Strone Ferry.

At the entrance to Loch Carron, the parallel beaches on opposite sides of the loch were

mistaken by not a few on board for railway embankments. Like the parallel beaches of Glen Roy and the other valleys of



Head of Loch Carron—from Strone Ferry.

Lochaber, they are obviously old moraines, but that does not make them less interesting; rather more

so. Unfortunately, we reached Strone Ferry pier just in time to see the eleven o'clock train steam out of the station, and meander along the coast of the Loch. It was rather aggra-

vating, no doubt; but everything comes to him who waits; and our disappointed friends, who wished to go southward, were able to enjoy a drive over the crest of the promontory to Bal-

macarra, and to return in time for the two o'clock train.

Loch Carron is a very beautiful sea. It cannot compare in grandeur or boldness with



Misty Morning—Loch Carron.

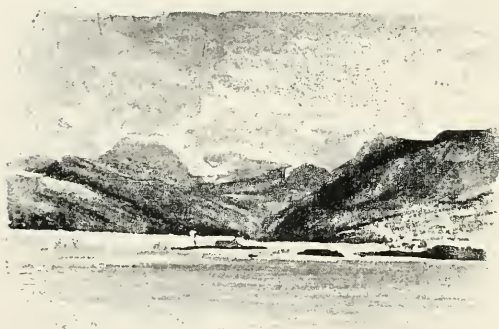
Loch Alsh or Loch Hourn. Its beauty is of a softer type, and a simpler character; but its charms are not less. The navigable entrance to it is narrow, owing to treacherous rocks; and the tide flows through the passage with tremendous force and speed. We pass on the one shore the ruins of Strome Castle, and on the other the handsome residence of Duncraig, and the fishing



The Coolins—The 'Dunottar Castle.'

village of Plockton—a collection of weatherbeaten huts, but prettily situated on an outstanding promontory. As we emerge from the Loch, we have a very grand view of the Coolins, with the ‘Dunottar Castle’ lying under their shadow, and of the islands of Scalpa and Raasay—the latter crowned with a curious little table-mountain over which the Old Man of Storr is distinctly visible.

Later in the day, and still on board the ‘*Iolanthe*,’ we steamed through the narrow passage of Kyle Akin (between Skye and the mainland) into Loch Alsh. The mouth of



Kyle Akin.

the loch is intersected by reefs and rocks, on the crest of one of which is the ruin of Castle Maoil. Near it, on the right hand, is the pretty village of Kyle Akin, built round a crescent-

shaped bay with lovely sands. One would like to pause at such a charming spot, or to visit Balmacarra, peaceful and sweet-looking, or to inspect more closely the monument, not far off, erected by Sir Roderick Murchison to the memory of one of his ancestors who heroically collected the rents of the proscribed Earl of Seaforth after the '45; but we have to content ourselves with distant views, in the meantime at least.

The constant changes in the character of the scenery of Loch Alsh are perplexing. We think we have reached the head of the loch, when, suddenly, a new channel opens up in



Castle Maoil—near Kyle Akin.



In Loch Alsh—Skye in the distance.

the apparently landlocked course. When King Haco of Norway found his way into this inland loch, as he did on his northward voyage after his defeat at Largs, he might very well have imagined himself to have been caught in one of his native fiords, so tortuous is the course and so difficult is the navigation.

At the head of the loch, we approach the ruin of Eilean Donan Castle, which stands at the junction of three lochs—



Eilean Donan Castle—Loch Duich.



Entrance to Loch Duich.

Loch Alsh, Loch Long, and Loch Duich. The castle, built on a detached island, must in olden times have been a place of strength; but the story goes that it was demolished by the guns of Cromwell. Passing the Castle on the left, we enter Loch Duich, which, though an arm of the sea, has all the appearance of a fresh-water lake, so smooth is its surface, and so soft and fertile are its banks. It attains its greatest beauty near the mansion-house of Inverinate and the village of Kintail, in the midst of rich woods on its northern shore. The prevailing green tints gleam out in the fitful sunshine with a richness and variety that are enchanting. At its head, the loch is closed in by a magnificent group of pyramidal mountains—Ben Attow, Scour Ouran, Ben Mhor, and the Saddle—all rising to a height of upwards of 3300 feet, and separated by well-defined and gloomy valleys.

The return voyage in the evening was very fine. As we emerged from Loch Alsh and crossed Loch Carron, we had



Head of Loch Duich.

again a grand view of the Coolins, cloud-capped and solemn, and traversed by the axled rays of the setting sun. We steamed in the direction of Loch Kishorn,

a northerly arm of Loch Carron, where the 'Dunottar Castle' awaited us, and where we anchored for the night.



The Coolins—from Loch Alsh.

That night was made memorable by several incidents. In the first place, the electric search-light was got into working order, and we astonished the natives of Courthill and other solitary houses by flashing the light of day in upon them at midnight. The ship's pinnace and other small craft on the loch appeared like lime-light pictures thrown on a screen. The submarine electric tackle, which is used in cases of accident to the screw, or to the bottom of the vessel, was also got into play; and a very striking and novel effect it produced. A number of small fishes were attracted by the light, and swam about within the halo it formed. The scene recalled forcibly the stanza which Byron completed by adding the last two lines:—

“The sun's perpendicular ray
Illumined the depths of the sea;
And the fishes, beginning to sweat,
Cried (something) how hot we shall be.”

Most memorable of all, the Captain's boy astonished every one by volunteering a hornpipe, while dancing was in progress on the promenade deck. Sir Donald summoned his piper to play the necessary accompaniment; but that did not suit Sammy's steps. He required the whole orchestra of the ship's band; and he gave them his instructions with the cool confidence of a professional performer. While he was in the very midst of his double-shuffle, Captain Webster appeared on the



The Piper.

gangway, calling, 'Sammy, you rascal, what are you doing there?' Sir Donald, fancying for the moment that the Captain was in earnest, rushed forward to propitiate his wrath. It was as good as a play. If the scene had been preconcerted, it could not have been more effective. But Sam was not in the least perturbed. He continued his performance amid the

applause of the whole company, until he was tired out. It afterwards transpired that the boy had been 'on the boards' before, probably in the part of the 'Midshipmite' in the Children's 'Pinafore.'



Head of Loch Kishorn.

VII

ROUND CAPE WRATH

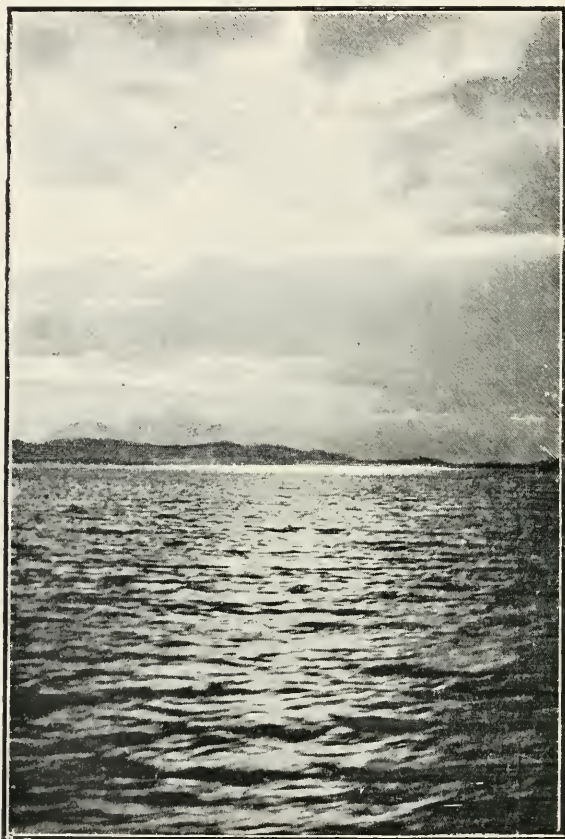
FRIDAY, September 5th, was perhaps the most enjoyable day of the whole cruise. We started, in magnificent weather, with the intention of steaming up the west coast to Cape Wrath, and thence eastward along the north coast to Thurso. We steered up the Inner Sound, between Raasay and Rona on the one hand, and the rugged



Rona Island—Lewis and Harris in the distance.

coast of Applecross on the other. We crossed Loch Torridon, at the head of which Ben Liugach rose in calm and majestic splendour. Opposite Gairloch, we had a fine view of Ben Slioch, which overlooks Loch Marec. Still finer, however, was the view backward, where the Coolins frowned even in the sunshine—the solemn pyramid of Blaven asserting itself in presence of loftier peaks. From this rugged background the rocky ridge extended northward by the Storr rocks and the Quiraing to the extremity of the

island. Toward the west, the misty outline of Lewis and Harris broke, but scarcely broke, the regularity of the horizon.



Summer Sheen—in Skye Waters.

Then we crossed Loch Broom, with its Summer Isles, and the point of Rhu-Coigach, and Enard Bay, and Loch Inver, and we began to recognise the peculiar character of the

Sutherlandshire mountains. They rise abruptly to a considerable height from wide intervening valleys, and they frequently assume the sugar-loaf shape. That is the case with Suilven, 'the sugar-loaf' *par excellence*, and also with Canisp, and Ben Stack, and Foinaven near Loch Laxford.

The whole coast is rugged and forbidding. Close to the Point of Stoer is the Rhu-Stoer, a detached columnar rock resembling the Old Man of Hoy in Orkney. Several other stacks of similar formation were seen as we passed northward, conspicuously 'The Shepherd' between Loch Inchar and Cape Wrath.

As we approached the latter, we felt once more the Atlantic swell, and the ship pitched and rolled somewhat, though she was as a rock in comparison with the



*The Coolins—Blaven—
Marsco.*

smaller coasting steamers that ply habitually in these waters, two of which we saw labouring heavily; and some of us, at least, felt thankful that we were not as they.

Cape Wrath, now seen by many of us for the first time, is really a splendid headland. The name in its modern interpretation may be appropriate enough, considering the wild seas that roar and bluster around it; but in point of fact it has no connection with the English word 'wrath.' It is a corruption of the Norse 'Hvarf,' which meant 'the turning-point of the land,' and might have been more cor-



Cape Whaitu
Lemoy Browne

rectly Englished 'Cape Warp.' The lighthouse stands on a cliff 370 feet above the sea, beneath which there is a succession of jagged points, or needle-rocks, stretching seaward, perforated at their bases with several openings, through which the surf breaks and spends itself in spray. A more perilous point for shipping in a dark night it would be hard to conceive. As we passed the Cape, the cold, rainy squalls which had followed us for some time cleared off, leaving behind them, however, very striking effects of sea and sky.

The north coast, east of Cape Wrath, partakes of the same rugged character as the promontory. There are castle rocks, and detached rocks, and dark 'cletts,' too numerous to mention. There are isolated mountains of considerable height about the dark Kyle of Durness, and Loch Erribol, and the Kyle of Tongue. The coast scenery, however, becomes rapidly tamer. Ben Hope and Ben Loyal are the last prominent peaks that stand out from the undulating plain.

Beyond Strathy Point, we reach the lowlands of Caith-



Thurso—from the Bay.

ness. Green meadows and yellow corn-fields sloping down to the golden sands become

common. Around Brims Ness and Holburn Head, the coast is as flat and level as the shores of Fife and the



The Old Man of Hoy.

Lothians. Near Holburn Head, however, there is another huge detached rock, 200 feet high, called the Clett, around which the ocean surges and swells night and day in most weathers. Passing this rock at a safe distance, we entered Thurso Bay, and anchored securely in Scrabster Roads. The rain

clouds cleared off toward evening, and revealed a beautiful sunset.

At Thurso (which is Thor's Town, another Norse landmark) we were in touch once more with the British railway and postal systems. The most prominent object on the mainland was the castle lately rebuilt by Sir J. G. Tollemache Sinclair—a cold-looking mansion, rendered more forbidding by the absence of trees. The town itself looked very picturesque, with its spires and chimneys breaking the coast-line, while the fields of golden grain that surrounded it bespoke fertility and prosperity. Other noteworthy features of the neighbourhood were Harold's Tower, the Bishop's Castle, and the bold bluffs of Dunnet Head, the most northerly point of the mainland. The northward view included the Orkney Islands, and Hoy Head, with the Old Man of Hoy at its base, which, at a later hour, and in the 'witching time of night,' stood out grandly in the moonlight.

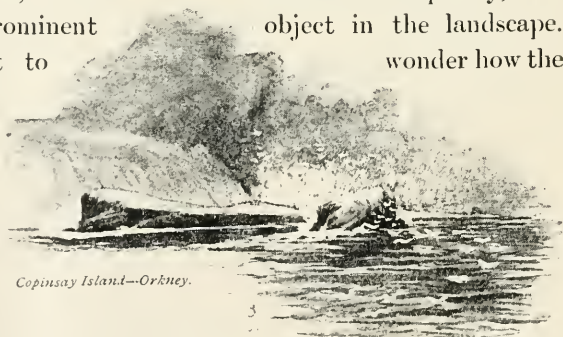
 'The Old Man of Hoy
 Looks out on the sea,
Where the tide runs strong, and the wave rides free :
 He looks on the broad Atlantic sea,
 And the Old Man of Hoy
 Hath this great joy,
To hear the deep roar of the wide blue ocean,
And to stand unmoved 'mid the sleepless motion,
 And to feel o'er his head
 The white foam spread
From the wild wave proudly swelling,
 And to care no whit
 For the storm's rude fit,
Where he stands on his old rock-dwelling.'

—PROFESSOR BLACKIE.

VIII

A RAID ON ORKNEY

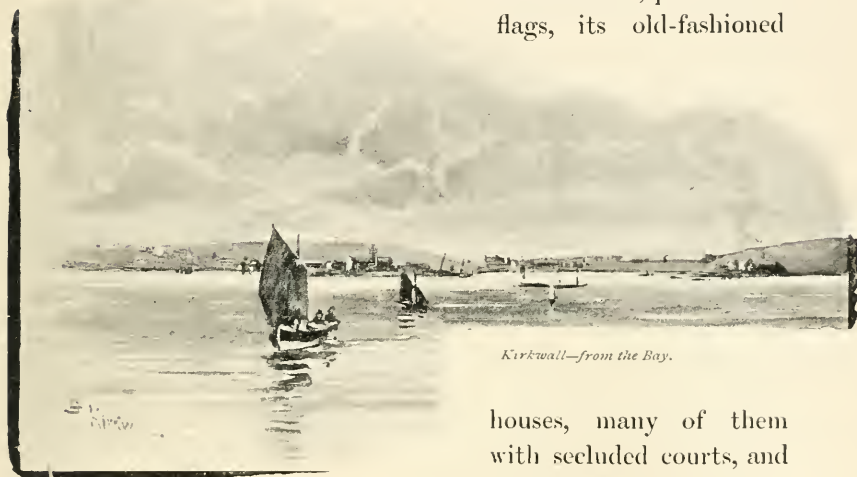
DURING the night we were rocked in the cradle of the deep, even at our anchorage, by the north-west wind, which blew strongly; and at an early hour in the morning, the anchor was weighed, and we steamed steadily through the Pentland Firth, generally a tempestuous passage, and then northward past the rugged islet of Copinsay, with its myriads of sea-birds, into Shapinsay Sound. Balfour Castle, on the island of Shapinsay, was the most prominent object in the landscape. One is apt to wonder how the massive building came there, so inconsistent is its pretentious appearance with its bare and cheerless surroundings. By-and-by we anchored in Kirkwall Roads, and every one, as quickly as possible, was



Copinsay Island—Orkney.

transferred to land in the 'Iolanthe,' and the steam launch, or the attendant gigs.

Kirkwall is not a very stirring or lively place, but it has an old-world flavour, which makes a visit to it pleasant and memorable. Its narrow and tortuous streets, paved with flags, its old-fashioned



Kirkwall—from the Bay.

houses, many of them with secluded courts, and presenting their gables

to the sea, and most of all its ancient Cathedral, invest it with a peculiar interest.

The Cathedral forms, of course, its chief attraction. This building, which is the most conspicuous object in the town, as seen either from the sea or from the land, dates from the twelfth century, having been founded by Jarl Rognvald in 1137, in memory of his uncle, St. Magnus. Its style is chiefly Norman, but it contains many features of the Pointed Gothic or Early English style, which makes it extremely interesting to the antiquary and the architect, resembling in that respect the famous Cathedral of

Trondhjem, which belongs to the same period. Outwardly, it is wonderfully well preserved. Though really a very small building of its kind—a cathedral in miniature,—its parts are so well proportioned that it has almost an imposing appearance. Worthy of special notice are the great east window, which Sir Henry Dryden believed to be unique; the circular window in the south transept; and the carving of the west door, which Dryden refers to as probably the finest example in the British Islands of the effective combination of particoloured stones. But the delicate floral work in the arch of the doorway is now much weather-worn, and the fine pillars are wasted to skeletons. The tower, to which we mounted, commands a splendid view of the town and bay and the surrounding islands.

From the Cathedral we passed to the Bishop's Palace,



The Earl's Palace—Kirkwall.

part of which is probably as old as the Cathedral itself, though the greater part is known to have been built in

the sixteenth century by Bishop Reid, who made additions to the Cathedral also. In the older part of this palace King Haco died on his return from Largs, and his remains lay for a time within the Cathedral.

Still more interesting are the remains of the Earl's Palace, which stands to the east of the last-named building. It was erected by the notorious Earl Patrick Stewart—"Black Pate"—about 1590. He was the son of Lord Robert Stewart (a natural son of James v.), Earl of Orkney. Black Pate also built Scalloway Castle in Shetland; and in the erection of both he levied contributions from his vassals and retainers without stint, requiring them not only to furnish the materials in stone, lime and eggs, with which the mortar was mixed, but also to work like slaves under his command: hence his by-name, "The Scourge of the Islands." By-and-by his notorious deeds became known in Edinburgh, and he was captured, and ended his career on the gallows.

He must, however, have been a man of fine taste and grand notions, if we are to judge by the architectural features of his palace. It is really a fine specimen of the Scottish baronial style, many of the details of ornament—



*The Earl's
Palace—
Kirkwall.*

in round turrets, quaint gables, and projecting windows—being beautiful, especially as seen through the grove of sycamore-trees which surrounds the building. A remarkable feature is a level arch over one of the great fireplaces in the banqueting hall, on either side of which the initials “P.E.O.” (Patrick, Earl of Orkney) may still be seen. This is one of the best examples of the straight arch in Scotland.

The day being exceedingly fine, a large contingent enjoyed a drive along the Stromness road to Maeshowe and the Stones of Brogar and Stenness.

Maeshowe is an unique chambered mound, and is one of the most interesting of the many interesting antiquities of Orkney. The mound is 36 feet high and 300 feet in circumference. The central chamber (15 feet square) is built of solid blocks of stone. The roof is of bee-hive shape, and in the walls there are on three sides deep cells or shelves 5 or 6 feet long. It is reached by a long and narrow passage, and as the whole is underground, it has to be explored by candle-light. The position and the dimensions of the cells suggest a place of burial, such as the early Britons used; but the numerous inscriptions on the walls are Runic and Norse. There has therefore been a great deal of discussion as to the purpose of the building; but the general belief now is that it was originally a Pictish sepulchre, and that it was broken into by the Norsemen after the ninth century, and was used by them as a place of refuge, and for the concealment of treasure.

A mile and a half farther on are the two celebrated stone circles, called respectively the Ring of Brogar and the Ring of Stenness. The latter is the smaller, though it has given its

name to the whole. According to our own Antiquary, who accompanied the party, that circle was 104 feet in diameter, and consisted originally of twelve stones, of which only two are standing. The Ring of Brogar, according to the same authority, was 340 feet in diameter, and comprised sixty stones, of which thirteen are standing, while ten others, though they have fallen, are still entire. We were assured that these are the finest stone circles in Scotland, far surpassing in extent the Stones of Callernish in Lewis, and comparing favourably with the more famous remains of Stonehenge. As to the purpose of these circles, we were left to solve the mystery for ourselves, being warned, however, that their connection with Druidical worship is now discredited.

One of the most famous of these monoliths was the Stone of Odin in the Stenness circle, now no longer erect. It was perforated by a hole, about five feet from the ground, and was regarded with the utmost veneration, being used (as the readers of Scott's *Pirate* will remember) as the place where lovers plighted their troth by clasping hands through the aperture. The stones in the case of both circles are of the Old Red Sandstone formation.



IX

OUR SHIP'S NAME-MOTHER

HE whole party returned to the 'Dunottar Castle' about five o'clock, and soon afterwards the anchor was weighed and we started on our homeward voyage. The wind, which had been blowing fresh from the north-west all day, fell away toward sunset, and during the night—the only night spent in sailing—we had a wonderfully quiet passage.

About five o'clock in the morning, those who were fortunate enough to occupy berths on the port side of the ship saw a magnificent sunrise. The sky was clear overhead, but there was a dense bank of clouds on the eastern horizon. Presently, in the midst of the dark mass, a ruddy longitudinal streak appeared. Then the streak was doubled and multiplied. The upper air glowed with opalescent tints. The clouds melted away, and the ruddy orb of the sun appeared on the verge of the ocean. The sea around us, and for miles away, was calm as a mirror, and reflected the gradations of light and the fiery hues of the eastern sky. It was an enchanting scene, such as could be witnessed only once or twice in a lifetime.

We passed Aberdeen about six o'clock, but at too great a distance to obtain a definite view. About breakfast-time we

were off Stonehaven, which threw back from its windows the rays of the morning sun. It was a glorious day. Not a cloud darkened the sky, not a ripple broke the surface of the sea except in the track of the ship. Presently we were abreast of the ruins of Dunottar Castle, perched on its rocky



Dunottar Castle.

pedestal—the veritable name-mother of our ship. The breakfast-bell was ringing (a welcome sound in ordinary circumstances), but every one was loath to leave the deck. The order was therefore given to lie-to until that necessary rite had been performed. Then we returned to the deck with satisfied spirits, and gazed for half an hour or more on the beautiful scene. Artists, photographers, and scribes were soon busily at work, all eager to catch the fleeting beauty.

The detached, or semi-detached, rock on which the ruins of the Castle stand is about two miles south of Stonehaven. It is 160 feet high, and a deep chasm separates it, all but completely, from the mainland, which at this point is wild and precipitous. The neighbourhood, indeed, is a continuous series of cliffs, which are frequented by numerous sea-birds: hence the popular name given to the coast, of the 'Fowlesheugh.'

Here again the resources of our own Antiquary were called into requisition, and he assured us, with the unblushing confidence of an expert, that the name of the Castle meant in Gaelic 'the fort of the low promontory.' It is easy to believe that the rock was the site of a castle from very early times, a siege of 'Dunfoither' (as it was then called) by a king of the Picts in the seventh century being on record (681 A.D.).¹ The Castle the ruins of which remain is of course of much later date, though its buildings belong to different ages. It appears, from evident signs, to have covered the greater part of the surface of the rock, which is $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres in extent.

Its position resembles very closely that of Tantallon Castle in the Firth of Forth, and before the days of artillery it must have been almost impregnable. Nevertheless, Blind Harry describes a capture of Dunottar by William Wallace, when four thousand Englishmen were burned in the Castle. It was re-fortified by Edward III. in 1336; but these incidents relate to an older castle than that of which the remains survive.

The present Castle, as far as can be ascertained, was begun by Sir William Keith, the 'Great Marischal of

¹ See Sir Donald Currie's *Book of Garth and Fortingall*, page 83.

Scotland,' towards the close of the fourteenth century, and the lands and castle remained in the hands of the Keith family till the Rebellion of 1715, when the owner threw in his lot with the Pretender, and forfeited his estates. One of the mottoes of the family was couched in the quaint and defiant words,

'They haif said:
O what say they?
Lat thame say!'

When the ship received the name of the Castle, these words also were adopted as its motto.



Dunottar Castle in the olden time— from an old print.

Dunottar was besieged by the gallant Marquis of Montrose during the great Rebellion, the Earl Marischal of that time having been a Covenanter (1645). Montrose offered him fair terms if he would capitulate, but the

Covenanting clergymen who had taken refuge within the Castle overruled him, as their kind overruled David Leslie at Dunbar; and he was not allowed to surrender. Thereupon the Marquis subjected the surrounding property to military execution, to the great dismay of the Earl, when he saw flames and smoke rising from his houses, and notwithstanding the assurance of Andrew Cant (ominous name) 'that the reek would be a sweet-smelling incense in the nostrils of the Lord.' Evacuation followed as a matter of course.

When Charles II. visited Scotland in 1650, he was entertained in Dunottar Castle by the seventh Earl Marischal. In the following year, when the English Parliamentary army overran Scotland, the Scottish Estates deposited the Regalia in Dunottar Castle, then deemed the strongest place in the kingdom, and George Ogilvy of Barras was appointed Lieutenant-Governor. It was besieged by Cromwell's army, and Ogilvy held out until famine rendered his troops mutinous, whereupon he surrendered. Before he did so, however, the Regalia had been cleverly removed by Mrs. Granger, the wife of the minister of Kinneff—a village on the coast, four miles farther south. Having obtained the permission of the English commandant to visit her friend Mrs. Ogilvy, the Lieutenant-Governor's wife, Mrs. Granger, carried with her, on leaving the Castle, a bundle of clothes, in which the Crown was imbedded, and also a huge distaff covered with lint, which was in fact formed of the Sceptre and the Sword of State.

The same night, the precious treasures were buried by the minister himself under the flags of his church at Kinneff; and there they remained till after the Restoration of 1660, when they were unearthed, and were presented to Charles II.

by the same George Ogilvy who had formerly been Commander of the Castle. Ogilvy's only reward was the title of Baronet, and a new coat of arms. The minister and his wife received no reward—not even thanks. Sir John Keith, the brother of the Earl Marischal, was made Earl of Kintore in 1677, and was the ancestor of the present Earl, who is the tenth to hold the dignity.

After its surrender to Cromwell, the Castle was partially dismantled and reduced to ruins. What remained of it was, like the Bass Rock, used as a State prison for the Covenanters during the persecutions under Charles II. and the Duke of York. One hundred and sixty-seven men and women were imprisoned at one time in its 'Whig's Vault,' or Black Hole, and nine of them speedily died of suffocation. Driven to despair, some twenty-five of them one night crept out of a window and along the face of the cliff, in the hope of effecting their escape. Two of these daring men fell over the rock and were killed. The others were captured, and were subjected to terrible cruelties.

A few years after the forfeiture already referred to, the Castle was sold, and was completely dismantled. It was subsequently repurchased by the Keith family; and it passed finally into the hands of Sir Alexander Keith, Writer, Edinburgh, whose grandson, Sir Patrick Keith Murray of Ochertyre, sold it in 1875 to Mr. Innes of Cowie, near Stonehaven.

Having studied the Castle and its surroundings long enough to deepen our impressions of it, we got up steam again, and went on our way past Bervie, with its outstanding Craig-David; past Montrose, stretched over a level site;

past Arbroath, with its tall chimneys, its spires, and its ancient Abbey,—all seen in the dim distance, and reposing peacefully in the Sabbath calm.



Montrose—from the Sea.

X

A DAY OF REST

T the morning service, which was held as usual in the saloon, Dr. Cameron of Cape Town preached an eloquent and suggestive sermon from Luke xiii. 29, ‘They shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.’ The words, he thought, were not inappropriate to the occasion; for the company was gathered from many parts of this country, and some of its members from distant lands. It might be said, indeed, that we had come from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south. After pointing out that the words were Christ’s real answer to the question, ‘Are there few that be saved?’ and showing that His restrictions applied to those who sought to enter the kingdom of God in other ways than by the strait gate, the preacher continued:—

‘My text gives us the vision of a great commonwealth or society, into which all worthy elements of human character are gathered up—a kingdom of God which is at the same time a kingdom of man. And they form a great multitude which no man can number, because fresh crowds are ever gathering into it. “The nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it.”

“‘They shall come from the East’—the land of immemorial traditions and gorgeous imaginations, of Oriental splendour and barbaric gold : the cradle of civilisation, and philosophy, and religion : where, a thousand years before Christ, mystics dreamed of a blessedness which could be reached only by those who mortified the flesh, and contemplated the unseen glories of the spiritual world ;—the East, with its patient millions who have borne without complaint the yoke of a cruel bondage : with its frankincense and myrrh, once laid in homage at the cradle of a little child : with its jewelled temples raised in honour of gods many and lords many, and its holy plains,

“Over whose acres walked those blessed feet
Which, eighteen hundred years ago, were nailed,
For our advantage, to the bitter cross.”

None of that splendour shall be lost : it shall receive a new consecration. That devotion shall find its true object : those dusky brows shall be decked by the hand of Him who hath made us kings and priests unto God. “They shall come from the east,” and sit down with prophets and patriarchs in the kingdom of God.

“‘They shall come from the West.’” The kingdom of God is no palace of luxury, no paradise of passive repose, where kings sit in solemn state, and mystics dream away their days in fruitless visions. It is the commonwealth of those banded together to do the work of the Lord, and there must be place in it for the practical vigour and the restless energy of the Western mind. The subtle Greek, who sent the arrows of his thought quivering into the heart of Europe : the practical Roman, fulfilling his great part in the commission to replenish and subdue the earth : the nations of modern Europe, with their culture, and power, and ambitions : the great Republic of the West, where the banner of religious freedom was unfurled, and great problems in politics and religion are being worked out—not one of these can be spared from the final association of men in the kingdom of God. Each has its contribution to bring. We are debtors to the Greek and the barbarian, to the

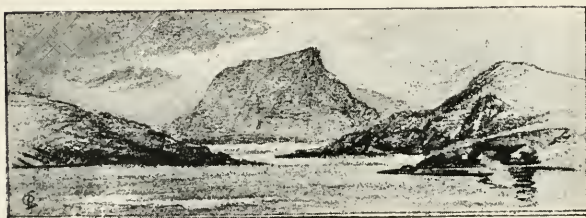
wise and the unwise : and they in their turn are debtors to the great world of which they form a part, and are to bring their glory and honour, their worth and their wisdom, into the Community of the Saved.

“They shall come from the North.” They came from the north in mighty hordes—those fierce barbarians who swept down upon the tottering Roman Empire, and crushed out what remained to it of life. Province after province was invaded by these terrible men, the fairest tracts of Southern Europe were occupied by them, and are still held by their descendants. They shall come again, Christ says, from the north : not for destruction, but for help and blessing : not to ravage the provinces of a decaying earthly empire, but to swell the population and to add to the wealth of the city of God : from the far north, the land of the midnight sun, and the noonday darkness, into the city of which the Lord is the everlasting light, and whose sun shall no more go down for ever.

“They shall come from the South” : where palm-trees cast their grateful shadows on the earth, and temples lift their stately heads to heaven. We read and speak of the luxury and ease of the South, where life is free from care, and its burdens rest very lightly on men whose hearts are bright and gay. But there is a place even for something of this kind in the final home. There must be rest and peace, as well as toil and energy : enjoyment, as well as action. So the men of the South come trooping in at the call of Christ, even as the Queen of the South once came to hear the wisdom of Solomon. From the banks of the river of Egypt, with its mighty pyramids and mystic learning : from the central plains and southern shores of the dark continent of Africa, which shall one day be light in the Lord : from the new world of the Southern Seas with their multitude of islands, and from that greater Britain which is throbbing with the vigorous life of what they love to call the Mother Country—from each and all of these they shall come, a goodly host, each under its own standard, but high over all the blood-red banner of the Captain of our Salvation. They shall come, a great multitude which no man can number,

“from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south”: and this is the processional hymn to the music of which they march through the gates into the city—

“Unto Him that loved us, and washed
us from our sins in His own blood,
And hath made us kings and
priests unto God and His Father ;
To Him be glory and dominion
for ever and ever. Amen.”



Entrance to Loch Torridon.

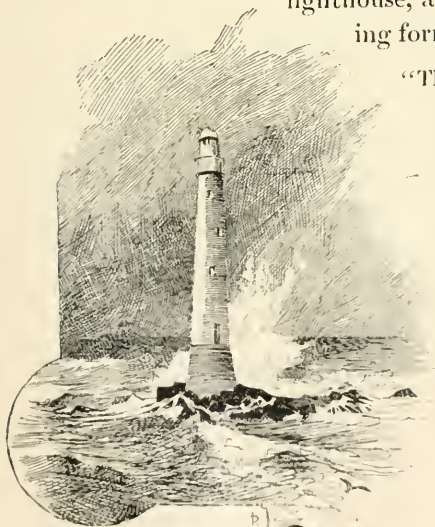
XI

HOMEWARD BOUND

WHEN we returned to the deck we found ourselves within sight of the Bell Rock, off the Firth of Tay, and the old stories were retold of the fate of Ralph the Rover, and of the trials and hair-breadth 'scapes of Robert Stevenson and the heroes who helped him to build the famous lighthouse, and to carry out in an enduring form the humane intentions of

“The pious Abbot of Aberbrothock.”

A heavy haze now began to gather on the shore. No trace of St. Andrews could be seen. The East Neuk of Fife, with King's Barns on the one side and Crail on the other, was only dimly visible. Steaming close to the Isle of May, we saw very plainly its lighthouses, its store-



The Bell Rock Lighthouse.

houses, and its ruined chapel of St. Adrian. We were reminded, in view of recent events, that this island is nearly of the same size as Heligoland ; and one wonders that it has



May Island.

not been turned to as good account as the latter. Late in the evening we entered the Firth of Forth by the passage between Tantallon Castle and the Bass Rock, in order to obtain a view of these famous fortresses.

Tantallon Castle, like Dunottar, stands on a detached



Tantallon Castle.

rock, and is accessible from the mainland only at one point. It is famous in the history of Scottish wars, and especially

in that of the house of Douglas. Every one is familiar with Scott's graphic description of it, and of the parting scene of Marmion and Douglas at its gate :—

‘ On the Earl’s cheek the flush of rage
O’ercame the ashen hue of age :
Fierce he broke forth,—“ And darest thou then
To beard the lion in his den,
The Douglas in his hall ?
And hopest thou hence unscathed to go ?—
No, by Saint Bride of Bothwell, no !—
Up drawbridge, grooms !—what, warder, ho !
Let the portcullis fall.”—

Lord Marmion turned—well was his need—
And dashed the rowels in his steed,
Like arrow through the archway sprung ;
The ponderous gate behind him rung :
To pass there was such scanty room,
The bars, descending, razed his plume.’

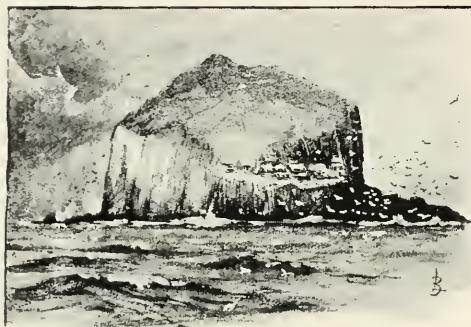
The buildings and the surrounding walls cover the entire surface of the rock. Its strength in olden times was proverbial, and led to the saying—

‘ Ding doon Tantallon,
Mak’ a brig to the Bass,’

the one achievement being deemed about as easy as the other. The ruins as seen from the sea do not present any picturesque features, but they give the impression of a place of great size, and practically impregnable.

The Bass Rock (313 feet high) is the counterpart in the Firth of Forth of Ailsa Craig in the Firth of Clyde ; and it is remarkable that these two rocks are the only ones in Scotland that are frequented by the gannet, or solan goose. The Bass presents a very bold outline, from whatever point it may be seen. Its summit slopes from north to south, and

it is surrounded on all sides by steep cliffs, rising sheer out of the sea. The only possible landing-place is on a shelf of



The Bass Rock.

rock on the south side, above which are the ruins of a fortress, which stretched across the island from east to west.

This fortress, as has been mentioned, was used as a State prison in the times of

Charles II. and his brother James VII. Many Covenanters were immured there, including stout old John Blackadder, who died on the island after a long imprisonment. The Bass was the last stronghold in Britain that held out for James VII., and after its surrender its castle was demolished.

As we passed close to the rock the steam-whistle was sounded, and at once great numbers of solan geese rushed forth like a living whirlwind, darting and wheeling in the air, and filling it with their hoarse cries. The noise had scarce died away when we passed North Berwick—sentinelled by its Law, and guarded by its outposts, Craigleith and Fidra. The haze grew denser and denser as we sailed up the Firth of Forth, so much so that it was thought advisable to go at half-speed. Inchkeith was not visible until we were within less than a mile of it. One consequence of the changed atmospheric conditions was that a projected visit to the Forth Bridge had to be postponed;

another was, that we failed to obtain the view of Edinburgh from the sea, which is considered one of the finest.

Above Inchkeith, we were met by a tug from the shore, which brought out some of the representatives of the Leith house (James Currie and Co.) and other friends. The tug marshalled us the way to our anchorage; and about six o'clock we dropped anchor in Leith Roads, not without regret that the act signalised the practical termination of our delightful cruise.

After dinner that evening, Sir Arthur Blackwood and Lord Provost Muir expressed to Sir Donald Currie, in the name of the guests, their hearty thanks for his splendid hospitality, and for the pleasure which the trip had afforded them in many ways. Captain Webster, his officers and men, were not forgotten in this thanksgiving service; and well they deserved this recognition, for what was a pleasure-trip to the guests involved no little hard work for them. Indeed the Captain declared that his anxieties had turned his hair white, but he added that the many kind things said of him had restored its natural colour—a kind of capillary blush after the blanching of care.



Inchkeith.

XII

IN THE FIRTH OF FORTH

NEXT morning the mist had risen sufficiently to show dimly, but yet with a certain poetic mystery, the beauties of the unrivalled position of 'the grey Metropolis of the North' within her cincture of hills—Salisbury Crags and Arthur's Seat, Blackford Hill and the Braids, Corstorphine Hill and the wooded heights of Dalmeny and Hopetoun. In the midst, there was a dreamy indication of



the city, with its masses of buildings following the contours of the undulating site, and relieved by outstanding spires, monuments, and tall chimneys—the whole culminating in the Castle Rock, which stood out like an aerial island from a sea of haze.

In the forenoon, a delightful trip was made in the 'Iolanthe' up to and under the Forth Bridge; and those who made it were rewarded with a splendid view of that wonder-

ful structure. As every one knows, the view of the Bridge from the sea is the finest that can be obtained. You see it as a whole. You take in at a glance all its details. You see each of the cantilevers separately, as well as the connecting girders. You see the width of the great spans and the height of the 'fair-way'; and you understand why such vast superstructures were necessary in order to secure the stability of the intermediate railway line. All this is missed by one who crosses the Bridge in a railway carriage, unless, as occurred once in the experience of the writer, the western sun casts a perfect shadow of the Bridge on the placid bosom of the Firth below.

In the course of the day, several thousands of the inhabitants of Edinburgh and Leith visited the 'Dunottar Castle,' on the general invitation of the Castle Company, and in steamers provided for their accommodation. The extent to which the privilege was taken advantage of showed how highly it was appreciated.

In response to special invitations, the Corporations of Edinburgh and Leith, the Merchant Company, the Chambers of Commerce, and other public bodies, paid a visit to the ship about noon, and were entertained to luncheon, to the number of 150, Sir Donald Currie presiding. The manner in which the extempore function was carried through showed that the resources of the ship, without extraneous aid, were quite equal to such an emergency. It is needless to do more than refer to the eloquent speeches in which the beauty of the ship and the enterprise of its owners were acknowledged.

Then, at length, the harmonious party, which for ten days had been at home in the great ship, was scattered promiscuously to the East and the West, the North and the

South, to resume old ties of love and friendship, but not to forget the new ties that had been formed.

In the evening of the same day, the great ship left her moorings and sailed for London, there to take her appointed place in the Cape and Natal Mail Service; and no vessel ever entered on her career with more cordial good wishes from troops of friends than

‘THE DUNOTTAR CASTLE.’



The Tug in Leith Roads.

EPILOGUE

History, in these days, is made more rapidly than it is written. Before these sheets have left the Press, there comes the news that 'The Dunottar Castle' has 'beaten the record' on her first Cape voyage in both directions.

She made the outward passage in 16 days, 11 hours, 54 minutes, and completed the homeward run to Plymouth in 16 days, 6 hours, net steaming time. The fastest passages previously recorded were made by 'The Roslin Castle': outward in 17 days, 10 hours, 15 minutes, and homeward in 16 days, 16 hours, 35 minutes. 'The Dunottar Castle' has thus shortened the passage between England and the Cape by nearly a whole day.

W. S. D.

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